

MINUTES OF THE NEBRASKA NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING

September 27, 2005
Holiday Inn Convention Center
Kearney, Nebraska

Those in attendance were:

Jim Van Marter, Chair
Roger Korell, Member
Wayne Madsen, Member
Keith Rexroth, Member
Myron Lembke, Member
Wayne Davis, Member
Gary Anderson, Member
Richard Hadenfeldt, Member
Vince Kramper, Member
Dan Watermeier, Member
Clinton Johannes, Member

Joe Hergott, Member
Richard Jiskra, Member
Arlond Garratt, Member
John Burkholder, Member
Dave Clabaugh
Scott Sobotka
Robert Mohler
Don Roberts
Doug Gahn
Tom Pesek, Staff
Gayle Starr Staff

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order in the conference room at the Holiday Inn in Kearney, Nebraska by Commission Chair Jim Van Marter at approximately 2:30 p.m.

NOTICE OF THE MEETING

Notice of the meeting was placed in the LINCOLN JOURNAL & STAR and the KEARNEY HUB on Sept. 20, 2005.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIAL

The following items of informational material were distributed during the course of the meeting and a copy of each is attached to the file copy of the minutes:

1. Nebraska Resources Development Fund Present Financial Status.
2. Nebraska Resources Development Fund Quarterly Report.
3. Recommendation of the Acting Director on the Lower Turkey Creek Watershed Project.
4. Letter from Lower Loup NRD on Lake Ericson Dam Improvement Project.
5. Policy Statements V, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, and XII.
6. Status of Small Watersheds Flood Control Fund.
7. Soil & Water Conservation Fund – Expenditures by Month, 1998-2006.
8. Republican River Basin Water Meter Program Status Report and Summary.
9. Natural Resources Water Quality Fund Status.
10. Water Well Decommissioning Fund Status.
11. Republican Basin EQIP & Platte – Republican CREP.
12. DNR Fund Expenditures for July & August, 2005.
13. NRCS Report.

MINUTES

It was noted that the minutes distributed to Commission members had incorrectly stated that the September Commission meeting would be on September 28 instead of September 27 but that the official file copy indicated September 27. Motion was made by Kramper and seconded by Jiskra to approve the minutes with the above noted correction. Motion carried.

Aye: Davis, Kramper, Lembke, Rexroth, Garratt, Johannes, Hadenfeldt, Anderson, Burkholder, Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Korell, Van Marter

Nay: Madsen

Not Present: Donaldson

EXPENDITURES

Gayle Starr noted that the expenditures for July and August, 2005, had been distributed to Commission members. He explained that July 1 is the beginning of the two year state budget biennium period and that the information in the expenditure report reflects that.

ACTING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jim Van Marter indicated that Ann Bleed had advised him that she would be unable to attend the meeting because of some other commitments and that Gayle Starr would be providing some information. Starr briefly reviewed the status of staff work on the LB 962 process. Starr also briefly reviewed water administration work during the irrigation season and noted some staff changes that had occurred.

ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

Vince Kramper noted that the Trust had received over 100 requests for in excess of \$30 million dollars for this funding cycle. He added that the Trust had approximately nine million dollars available to award but about three million of that total is reserved for the second and third year of grants that have been approved in previous years. He added that he is on the Grants Committee that will be reviewing all of the applications and making a recommendation to the full Board at a future meeting.

WATER POLICY TASK FORCE

Clint Johannes explained that the Task Force would be meeting on October 6 in Kearney and that their main task will be to discuss alternatives for funding the work of LB 962 and arriving at some recommendation regarding that issue.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Clint Johannes called on Tom Pesek who provided the Resources Development Fund status report and reviewed the status of each active project as included in the quarterly report provided to Commission members.

Pesek distributed the Acting Director's recommendation on the Lower Turkey Creek Resources Development Fund Project application and reviewed several points of the recommendation. He noted that Commission procedure provides for a tour of the project prior to the next Commission meeting and action on the recommendation at that next Commission meeting. He explained that the tour is tentatively scheduled to begin at about 11:00 a.m. on November 16 and should take no more than four hours total. Clabaugh and Sobotka gave a brief presentation regarding the project.

Pesek explained that the Lower Loup NRD was requesting a transfer of funds between components of the Lake Ericson Resources Development Fund project. Robert Mohler, representing the Lower Loup NRD, explained the reasons for the need to transfer funds and noted that it was not necessary to increase any funding but rather shift funds between components and that when the total of all bills is completed that there will be some funds returned. Motion was made by Davis and seconded by Kramper to approve the transfer of \$9,891.09 from Component No. 2 (Final Engineering Design) and \$37,870.31 from Component No. 5 (Construction-Recreation) to Component No. 4 (Construction-Structural) of the Lake Ericson Project. Motion carried.

Aye: Kramper, Lembke, Rexroth, Garratt, Johannes, Hadenfeldt, Anderson, Burkholder, Hergott, Davis, Jiskra, Watermeier, Korell, Madsen, Van Marter

Nay: None

Not Present: Donaldson

Tom Pesek explained that over the years the Commission has adopted several policy statements regarding the operation of the Resources Development Fund and the conduct of the Commission responsibilities to the fund. He distributed copies of the policy statements and reviewed the background and purpose of each of them. He added that input from project sponsors would be solicited and that further discussion of the policy statements could take place at the Program Committee in connection with the November 16-17 meeting.

Pesek distributed the Status Report of the Small Watersheds Flood Control Fund and briefly reviewed the status of the fund.

Gayle Starr distributed the status reports of the Soil and Water Conservation Fund, Natural Resources Water Quality Fund,

Water Well Decommissioning Fund, and reviewed each of them. He also distributed a status report on the Environmental Quality Incentives Program being operated in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Platte-Republican Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program being operated in partnership with the Farm Services Agency.

NRCS REPORT

Doug Gahn, representing the Natural Resources Conservation Service, noted that he was filling in as Acting State Conservationist while Steve Chick is fulfilling a 60 day assignment at the NRCS headquarters in Washington, DC. Gahn distributed a report from NRCS and reviewed a number of issues and responded to questions from Commission members.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Commission will be November 16 & 17 in Lincoln. Gayle Starr noted that lodging and the meeting will be at the Hampton Inn in Lincoln which is located at the airport exit off I-80.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Chair

Director of Natural Resources